(19) World Intellectual Property Organization

International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date 27 January 2005 (27.01.2005)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number WO 2005/007046 A2

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: A61F 5/02

(21) International Application Number:

PCT/CA2004/001040

(22) International Filing Date: 19 July 2004 (19.07.2004)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

60/487,948 18 July 2003 (18.07.2003) US

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(30) Priority Data:

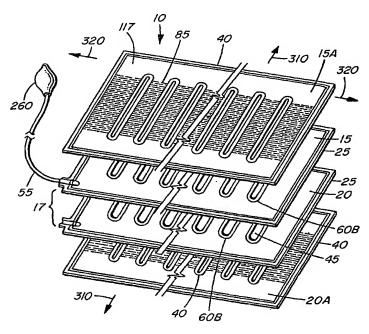
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- (81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.
- (84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM),

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: FLUID OPERATED ACTUATORS AND PNEUMATIC UNLOADING ORTHOSES



(57) Abstract: A flexible fluid filled actuator has an elastic bladder and a guide surrounding the bladder. The guide has asymmetrical elastic properties. When the bladder is inflated the guide directs the bladder to expand preferentially in a selected direction or directions. The actuator has utility in the traction and/or unloading of portions of the body. A fluid-filled traction apparatus is disclosed which has particular advantages in spinal unloading.

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European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

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